

**Minutes of the proceedings of the Council  
Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2021 at 6.00 pm  
Microsoft Teams Meeting**

**Present:**

Councillor D Stanley (Mayor)  
Councillor H Bills (Deputy Mayor)  
Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, R Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, J Baines, N Barlow, C Barnett, C Bayton, I Bevan, R Body, P Bradley, R Burston, R Buttery, K Casey, B Challenor, S Clark, J Cooper, B Cotterill, J Cowell, S Craigie, T Crumpton, P Drake, C Elcock, M Evans, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, B Gentle, A Goddard, S Greenaway, M Hanif, D Harley, P Harley, A Hopwood, Z Islam, L Johnson, L Jones, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, P Lowe, J Martin, P Miller, A Millward, S Mughal, C Neale, G Partridge, C Perks, S Phipps, N Richards, S Ridney, J Roberts, M Rogers, P Sahota, K Shakespeare, A Taylor, E Taylor, L Taylor, D Tyler, D Vickers, V Wale, S Waltho, T Westwood and Q Zada together with the Chief Executive and other Officers

**Prayers**

The Mayor led the Council in prayer.

51 **Declarations of Interest**

Declarations of interest, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members:

Councillor A Aston - Any references to matters affecting West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by the WMAS.

Councillors M Evans and D Vickers - Any matters relating to Castle Hill Development and all references to Dudley Zoo - Non-pecuniary interests as members of Dudley and West Midlands Zoological Society Limited.

Councillors L Jones and A Taylor - West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) – Transport Delivery Committee - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Committee.

Councillor R Burston - Any references to WMCA - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by the WMCA.

Councillor I Bevan – Any references to Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust / Russells Hall Hospital – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor Q Zada – Any references to Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillors N Barlow and P Miller – Any references to West Midlands Fire and Rescue Authority - Non-pecuniary interests as Members of the Authority.

Councillor E Taylor – References to Dudley Group of Hospitals – Non-pecuniary interest as her daughter was employed at Russells Hall Hospital.

Councillor S Waltho - References to Dudley Group of Hospitals – Non-pecuniary interest as a nominated Member of the Council of Governors on the Dudley Group of Hospitals.

Councillor C Neale – References to Dudley Group of Hospitals – Non-pecuniary interest in view of his wife's employment at Russells Hall Hospital.

Councillor D Tyler – References to Dudley MIND – Non-pecuniary interest as Chair of Trustees at Dudley MIND.

Councillor K Casey – Any references to WMCA - Pecuniary interest in any matters directly affecting his employment by the WMCA.

Councillor S Ali – Non-pecuniary interest due to his Non-Executive role at Black Country Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor M Hanif – Pecuniary interest in any matters directly relating to his position as a Personal Assistant registered on People Plus Independent Living Services.

---

## 52 **Mayor's Announcements**

With the agreement of the Mayor, Councillor A Millward made a request for Members to be involved, as corporate parents, in the various groups and workshops established by the Children's Corporate Parenting Board to assist care leavers. A further email would be circulated to Members of the Council.

The Mayor reported on the retirement of Matt Williams (Acting Chief Executive) and Garry Dean (Acting Director of Public Realm). On behalf of the Council, the Mayor thanked both Officers for their many years of service and wished them a long, healthy and happy retirement.

---

53 **Suspension of Council Procedure Rules**

It was moved by Councillor P Harley, seconded by Councillor D Vickers and

**Resolved**

That, under Council Procedure Rule 22.1, the time restriction of five minutes referred to in Council Procedure Rule 14.4, be suspended to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal and the Lead Opposition Spokesperson to speak for longer than five minutes on Minute No. 54 below and to enable the Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal to speak for longer than five minutes to exercise his right of reply to the debate.

---

54 **Revenue Budget Strategy and Setting the Council Tax 2021/22**

A joint report of the Chief Executive and the Director of Finance and Legal was submitted, setting out recommendations concerning the deployment of General Fund revenue resources, a number of statutory calculations that had to be made by the Council and the Council Tax to be levied for the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2022.

Following a speech by Councillor S Clark (Cabinet Member for Finance and Legal), it was moved by Councillor S Clark and seconded by Councillor D Vickers that the recommendations, as set out in the report submitted to the meeting, be approved and adopted.

Councillor P Lowe (Lead Opposition Spokesperson for Finance and Legal) addressed the meeting on behalf of the Labour Group.

Following the speech by Councillor P Lowe, the motion was the subject of a general debate by Members of the Council.

At the conclusion of the debate, Councillor S Clark exercised his right to reply pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 14.9.

The motion was put to the vote and it was

**Resolved**

- (1) That the Council note:
  - (a) The actions of the External Auditors as set out in paragraph 14 of the report.
  - (b) The forecast variances to budget in 2020/21 and progress with delivery of savings, as set out in paragraphs 17 to 19 and Appendices B and C of the report.

- (2) That with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2021, for properties which have been empty (i.e. unoccupied and unfurnished) for more than ten years, an Empty Homes Premium of 300% be applied, resulting in a 400% Council Tax charge being payable in these circumstances, as set out in paragraph 30 of the report.
- (3) That with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, the Council Tax Reduction Scheme be documented in such a manner that any personal allowances, premiums, disregards and non-dependent deductions are automatically linked to equivalent annually up-rated values published by central Government in either Housing Benefit Legislation or the prescribed Council Tax Reduction Scheme for pensioners (including any other miscellaneous amendments to the aforementioned legislation that are relevant to the local scheme), thus allowing any approved scheme locally to be automatically carried forward to future years, without the need for annual public consultation and re-approval, until such time that further scheme changes are considered, as set out in paragraph 31 of the report.
- (4) That the budget for 2021/22 and Directorate allocations set out below, including the Public Health budget as set out in the report, be approved:

Revenue Budget Allocations 2021/22

Directorate	£m
Adult Social Care	102.183
Children's Services	74.246
Health and Wellbeing	3.450
Chief Executive	-0.045
Corporate and Treasury	18.083
Finance and Legal	3.737
Commercial and Customer Services	0.524
Regeneration and Enterprise	10.898
Housing and Community	6.842
Public Realm	51.389
<b>Total Service Budget</b>	<b>271.307</b>

- (5) That the Director of Finance and Legal and the Director of Public Health and Wellbeing, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care and the Opposition Spokesperson for Health and Adult Social Care, be authorised to approve any minor changes to the 2021/22 budget proposals resulting from the final allocation of Public Health Grant as set out in paragraph 53 of the report.

(6) That the statutory amounts required to be calculated for the Council's spending, contingencies and contributions to reserves; income and use of reserves; transfers to and from its collection fund; and Council Tax requirement; as referred to in Section 67(2)(b) be now calculated by the Council for the year 2021/22 in accordance with Sections 31A, 31B and 34 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as follows:

- (a) £748.653m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (*The Council's spending, contingencies, contribution to reserves and specified transfers from the general fund to the collection fund*).
- (b) £615.495m being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Sections 31A (3) of the Act (*The Council's income, use of reserves, and specified transfers from the collection fund to the general fund*).
- (c) £133.158m being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A(4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year.
- (d) £1450.5145 being the amount at (c) above divided by the Council Tax base of 91,800.53 calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B (1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year.

(e) Dudley Council Tax for each Valuation Band

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
967.01	1,128.18	1,289.35	1,450.51	1,772.85	2,095.19	2,417.52	2,901.03

being the rounded amounts given by multiplying the amount at (d) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different bands.



(f) Precepts for each Valuation Band

That it be noted for the year 2021/22, that the major precepting authorities have issued the following amounts in precepts to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of the dwellings shown below:

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
West Midlands Police	118.37	138.09	157.82	177.55	217.01	256.46	295.92	355.10
West Midlands Fire and Rescue	42.02	49.03	56.03	63.04	77.04	91.05	105.06	126.07

- (7) That having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts in Appendix M to the report, the Council, in accordance with Section 30(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, agrees the following levels of Council Tax for 2021/22:

<u>Valuation Bands</u>							
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>
<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
1,127.40	1,315.30	1,503.20	1,691.10	2,066.90	2,442.70	2,818.50	3,382.20

- (8) That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in the report, be approved.
- (9) That the Council determine that a referendum relating to Council Tax increases is not required in accordance with Chapter 4ZA of Part 1 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 as set out in paragraph 55 of the report.
- (10) That Cabinet Members, the Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and Directors be authorised to take all necessary steps to implement the decisions of the Council, in accordance with the Council's Financial Management Regime.

Pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 16.4 and under the provisions of the Local Authorities (Standing Orders) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the voting on the motion was recorded as follows:-

For (36)

Councillors N Barlow, I Bevan, P Bradley, R Burston, R Buttery, B Challenor, S Clark, J Cooper, C Elcock, M Evans, A Goddard, S Greenaway, D Harley, P Harley, A Hopwood, L Johnson, L Jones, S Keasey, I Kettle, E Lawrence, P Lee, A Lees, K Lewis, P Miller, A Millward, C Neale, S Phipps, N Richards, J Roberts, M Rogers, K Shakespeare, D Stanley, A Taylor, L Taylor, D Vickers, and T Westwood.

Against (35)

Councillors A Ahmed, K Ahmed, R Ahmed, S Ali, A Aston, M Aston, J Baines, C Barnett, C Bayton, H Bills, R Body, K Casey, B Cotterill, J Cowell, S Craigie, T Crumpton, P Drake, A Finch, K Finch, J Foster, B Gentle, M Hanif, Z Islam, P Lowe, J Martin, S Mughal, G Partridge, C Perks, S Ridley, P Sahota, E Taylor, D Tyler, V Wale, S Waltho and Q Zada

---

55 **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business for consideration at this meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.40 pm

MAYOR

